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ABSTRACT

This proposal seeks to deal with the problems of underachievement in reading and arithmetic by students in the District of Columbia school system. Some prevalent theories which seek to explain underachievement are presented, as well as basic assumptions of the proposed educational design. The design as presented includes proposals for the curriculum, educational personnel, students, parents, evaluation of student performance, and overall organization of the public school systems. (Author/DM)

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A DESIGN FOR THE ATTAINMENT OF HIGH ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT FOR THE STUDENTS OF THE PUBLIC ELEMENTARY AND JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS OF WASHINGTON, D.C.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON
EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY
UNITED STATES SENATE

SEPTEMBER 1970

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FOREWORD

Some decades ago, the large city school systems of this country were considered to be among the best anywhere and offered the most varied and complete precollege education available. Now in 1970, while our society has become increasingly complex and technical and the need for citizens to be well trained and fully educated is even more critical, many experts, teachers, school administrators, as well as parents and students feel that the public schools in America's major urban centers are failing to meet the needs of the masses of children.

The complex problems relating to urban education are many and varied: the seemingly constant need for additional finances, increased demands on the systems by parents and students, the tendency of large systems to become more rigid rather than flexible, increased teacher demands, the failure of most large city systems to integrate or implement successful and sustained compensatory programs, and the loss of public confidence as well as other issues have served to limit the capacity of urban school systems to fully serve their clients. Many remedies for increasing the effectiveness of urban schools have been proposed and tried.

"A Possible Reality," prepared by the Metropolitan Applied Research Corp. (MARC), of New York, and recently adopted by the District of Columbia Board of Education, is an attempt to meet and overcome the problems of urban educational failure. This proposal seeks to deal with the problems of underachievement in reading and arithmetic by students in the District of Columbia system and has, like other proposals in other cities, created much discussion and controversy. It is reproduced here because of the widespread interest in it in the Congress and among persons concerned with education problems both within and outside of the District of Columbia.

WALTER F. MONDALE,
Chairman, Select Committee on Equal Educational Opportunity.

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A POSSIBLE REALITY

A Design for the Attainment of High Academic Achievement for the Students of the Public Elementary and Junior High Schools of Washington, D.C.

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This report is a culmination of the concentrated efforts the commitment, and personal and professional involvement of a special Task Force drawn from the staff and Fellows of the MARC Corporation. It is the product of the research, the thoughts, and the discussions of all of the members of this Task Force.

Throughout my professional career I have rarely observed a group of individuals who addressed themselves to a problem of this complexity with such sustained enthusiasm, sense of seriousness, and personal conviction. Each member of this Task Force seemed motivated by the unquestioned belief that it was possible to plan and obtain a program for educational excellence in the public schools of Washington, D.C.

The usual words of appreciation are inadequate to express my personal admiration and respect for the wonderful human beings who were associated with me in the development of this educational program. They are as follows:

Senior Staff: Eleanor Farrar, Director, MARC Washington; Jeannette Hopkins, Vice President, Editorial Affairs, and Director, Urban Affairs Publications; Frank Reeves, Fellow, MARC Washington, and Director, Joint Center for Political Studies; and Max Rubin, Special Consultant.

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Kenneth B. Clark

July 2, 1970

I. THE PROBLEM

One of the most disturbing and persistent realities in contemporary American education is the fact that the academic achievement of minority group and lower-status children in urban public schools is consistently below norm. This retardation begins in the early elementary grades and continues at an accelerated rate through the upper grades. Cumulative academic retardation has become the most significant characteristic of large urban public school systems; it is probably the dominant educational problem in the United States today.

Numerous investigations and reports have reflected the concern of parents, teachers, educators, social scientists, and government officials confronted with this problem but, so far, the plethora of "pilot," "demonstration," "compensatory," "educational enrichment" and other programs initiated to cope with it have failed to bring about any measurable sustained improvement in the educational achievement of lower-status children in the basic academic skills of reading and mathematics, without which further learning is impossible.

Urban public school systems have, for the most part, continued to fail to educate the masses of their students for a constructive role in a complex industrialized society; they have produced

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hundreds of thousands of functional illiterates who are unable to compete with educationally more privileged youth on a single competitive standard academically or vocationally. This persistent educational default has become a major dilemma for industry and at all levels of government. It appears to be a critical factor in the volatility, the disruption, and the pervasive pathology of our cities. One can no longer view it in isolation as an educational problem or as an exclusively minority group problem, nor dismiss it as just another civil rights crisis.

Confronted with the evidence that their students are not immune to academic failure characteristic of the students in other large urban public school systems, and recognizing the profound human and social stability implication of this failure, the newly elected Board of Education of Washington, D.C. has determined to develop and implement a system-wide educational program designed to raise the academic achievement of children in the public elementary and junior high schools of that city. In pursuit of this objective, the President of the Board, Mrs. Anita Allen, invited the MARC Corporation to consult with the Board in developing a design for such a program.

II. SOME PREVALENT THEORIES WHICH SEEK TO EXPLAIN UNDERACHIEVEMENT

Although the persistent and cumulative educational underachievement of students in large urban public school systems is no longer denied or disputed, there is no consensus on the cause and no consensus on effective remedy, if indeed any is proposed. However, most explanations of cause, particularly those offered by educators and social scientists, tend to exclude or minimize the influence of the schools themselves as the determining or responsible factor in the underachievement of minority-group children.

Among the prevalent theories which seek to explain underachievement are these: demographic explanations, which tend to focus on such factors as group mobility; sociological explanations, which emphasize environmental, cultural and class differences; psychological explanations, which concentrate on problems of individual motivation and self-image; physiological explanations, which point to neurological and sensory deficiencies related to deprivation; and biological or racial explanations, which assert that lower-status and minority group children are genetically inferior.

Demographic explanations argue that where children live and go to school is significant in their achievement. It is asserted, for example, that the large numbers of lower-status children

whose families have migrated from the Southern states to Northern cities have brought with them the consequences of segregated and inferior education. If this were, indeed, the controlling factor one would expect that the longer these children remain in presumably better Northern urban schools, the greater would be the increase in their achievement. While such a trend was noted in the 1930's, as determined in a study of students in the New York City public schools (Klineberg, O., Negro Intelligence and Selective Migration, New York, 1935), it did not continue after the 1950's. In fact, in recent years, the evidence suggests that there are now no differences in academic achievement between those children who have spent all their lives in Northern urban schools and those in these schools who have migrated from the South.

Sociological explanations assert that cultural and class differences are the determining factors in low achievement of minority group students, and that these differences limit these students' ability to profit from education.

Some of the specific environmental deficiencies cited as inhibiting the capacity to learn are neighborhood crime and delinquency; broken homes; overcrowded, deteriorated and unsanitary housing; no-books-in-the-home; and other general conditions of poverty which send children to school without breakfast, without adequate clothing, and which prevent parents from providing quiet places for study. The

influence of peers among lower-class children--the effect of these children on each other--is also cited by some scholars as reducing the desire to learn; the pressure of middle-class or upper-class children, on the other hand, is credited with facilitating learning.

Such explanations are generally supported by "evidence" of a consistent relationship between low cultural and class status and low academic achievement and between high cultural and class status and high academic achievement. Given this consistent correlation, a causal relationship is assumed to exist. But no causal relationship has been proved.

If one accepted these explanations, the most direct way to increase academic achievement among students who are victims of these conditions would be to change the conditions themselves. This would not require primarily an educational program, but rather a vast program for social change. For example, if the assumption is that academic achievement is a secondary manifestation of poor housing, academic achievement could be increased only by a massive housing program.

There is evidence, however, that academic achievement of lower-status children provided with improved education has been significantly increased without any observable antecedent changes in the pattern of sociological deprivation--desirable and necessary

as such changes are. The inherent debilitating and degrading effect of racial segregation on all children to the contrary notwithstanding, there is strong evidence that racially segregated schools which minority group children are required to attend can effectively teach these children the fundamental learning skills of reading and arithmetic if the conditions of educational excellence are provided and sustained. Further, there is the overriding fact that those in control of public schools and other educational institutions do not have any significant decision-making power within the larger society. The only process over which they have effective control is education itself.

The educational effect of significant sociological factors can be determined only when the educational processes controlled by educators function up to the maximum efficiency. Only when educational quality is held constant will the influence of other factors on learning be ascertainable. The conditions for educational excellence do not now exist in any city-wide school system in the United States.

Psychological explanations assert that lower-class children lack motivation to learn and are frustrated when required to learn or are held to high educational standards. It is argued that academic aspirations are depressed by the cumulative

effect of discrimination on previous and present generations, and that these children and their families perceive no economic or social status rewards which they could hope realistically to obtain through high academic achievement. Students, therefore, with those social psychological handicaps and with low motivation are expected to be inattentive, hyperactive, hostile, and aggressive.

While such explanations assert that the academic retardation is a consequence of these motivational and behavioral handicaps, it is just as conceivable that these handicaps are a consequence of the educational deprivation of these children. This latter is the perspective assumed in the preparation of this design. Regardless of the explanation, however, whenever one finds a disproportionate number of psychologically impaired students in a public school system, one cannot realistically deal with this problem in terms of individual clinical methods and therapy but must address oneself rather to the problem of bringing about the necessary changes within the educational system itself, which <u>produces</u> such casualties.

The so-called "emotionally disturbed" or "disruptive" child is often a child of high energy and capacity whose energies have not been effectively channeled toward academic achievement. A proliferation of special classes or special schools for these allegedly disruptive children, and excessive suspensions and

expulsions are counter-productive educationally. In effective programs, where children are assumed to be educable and are taught, the evidence is that the necessity of depending on such devices of last resort is reduced to a minimum.

Physiological explanations assert that academic retardation is a consequence of such byproducts of poverty and deprivation as auditory and visual and other sensory deficiencies; and brain and neurological defects resulting from prenatal and postnatal malnutrition. According to these theories these deficiencies block learning and result in hyperactivity, and inattentiveness, and interfere with the ability of children to compete with others, particularly in cognitive learning and abstract thought.

If an individual child is found to be suffering visual and auditory interferences with the ability to learn, such deficiencies should be corrected where correctable. In certain cases, special educational techniques and programs may be indicated. However, some students of the problem have presented valuable and poignant evidence that even in extreme cases of obvious mental retardation and organic brain injury, when these children are taught in supportive educational situations and when they are accepted by their teachers with "limitless love," many make dramatic educational and personal gains. A fact that restricts even more severely the usefulness of physiological explanations of academic underachievement

is that the evidence in the literature appears to be, for the most part, speculative and inconclusive concerning the incidence of physiologically impaired children in the public school system. Given the present ambiguity of diagnosis of mental deficiency --other than in cases of clear retardation and brain injury--and given the prevalence of underachievement in lower-status schools, there is great danger that a simple cause and effect relationship will be assumed and that children will be falsely labeled as retarded or intellectually defective, thereupon appearing to relieve from responsibility inefficient public school systems which, in fact, can produce academically damaged children. Rather than serving as useful diagnostic devices, labels such as retarded can become dangerous and tragic devices for isolating and rejecting educational casualties.

Biological and genetic explanations, probably the oldest of all the explanations of the academic retardation of lower-status children, are, in both crude or sophisticated forms, racist in their assertion that nonwhite or Negro children are intellectually inferior to whites because of inferior genes.

One cannot ignore such explanations, because they have deep roots in American history, and are compatible with the total contemporary pattern of persistent racism. Further, they are offered under the guise and the prestigious aura of "science." There is evidence

also that the theory's most recent resurgence, as proposed by Professor Jensen, has influenced thought and policy on the course of public school desegregation and on programs designed to upgrade the quality of education provided for minority group children.

The biological-genetic-racial explanations are the only explanations of academic underachievement that do not permit any form of external, postnatal manipulation to prevent or remedy academic retardation and to increase individual achievement. Theories that assume that certain children enter the world with inferior genes or as members of inferior races are clearly the most fatalistic of all explanations for underachievement; some are explicit in suggesting that the only proper technology for increasing academic achievement is eugenics--controlling the breeding of individuals with inferior genes. Such theories consider the academic retardation of allegedly inherently inferior races to be irremedial by any educational process. They assert that compensatory education programs will not work; that decentralization will not work; that desegregation will not work; and imply if they do not assert that nothing short of biological control will be effective.

One significant obvious flaw in the theories of nonwhite inferiority which, so far, has not been highlighted in the controversy is that the theories do not explain the fact that

low-income white students in urban public schools are also, as a group, consistently retarded in academic subjects.

However, it is obvious that the program proposed in this report rejects these simplistic, uni-dimensional theories altogether.

III. SOME BASIC ASSUMPTIONS OF THIS PROPOSED EDUCATIONAL DESIGN

The first assumption of this design to attain high academic achievement of the students in the public schools of Washington, D.C. is that no single, simple explanation can account for the present intolerable level of academic retardation and, therefore, that no single, simplistic remedy can suffice to correct it. Interestingly enough, the judicial demand for desegregation of schools in the United States Supreme Court's Brown decision of 1954 has led to a plethora of explanations, such as those summarized above which seem to have the function of explaining why desegregation of schools is educationally inadvisable; they tend to suggest rather that minority group children require special education because of their special needs determined by their special backgrounds and their special characteristics. It is the thesis of this report, however, that high quality of education in public schools cannot be attained nor can a tradition of educational stagnation be reversed by magic or by gimmicks. The determinants of the present pattern of educational retardation probably involve, in a complex interrelatedness, the many forms of cultural and racial inequities, and their various effects upon lower-status minority group students. It would follow, therefore, that a serious educational program which seeks to benefit these children in demonstrable ways must address

itself to, and reflect, this complexity and interrelatedness. A simple "blueprint" approach to this complex problem would merely repeat a past resort to educational tinkering and token programs which clearly have failed to raise academic achievement in public school systems.

It is here assumed that the relationship between cultural deprivation--environmental pathology, racial rejection--on the one hand, and academic retardation, on the other, is most complex and that these patterns of discrimination and injustices directly influence the academic performance of lower-status children to the extent that they converge upon, dominate, and are reflected in the atmosphere of the schools and the classrooms which these children are required to attend.

Lower-status schools tend to replicate the status distinctions of the larger society. They are generally perceived as inferior schools, and are often, actually, inferior in facilities, materials, and in morale. Just as the larger society neglects lower-status communities in regard to housing, sanitation, and other important municipal services, so does it neglect the schools in these communities. It is here asserted that the pervasive academic retardation of the children required to attend these schools reflects most directly and specifically not general "cultural deprivation" but rather the factor of school neglect--a part of the total pattern of neglect and rejection of powerless,

lower-status individuals and groups.

In summary, sociological and other dimensions of social injustices are critical determinants of academic retardation only when they are permitted to intrude into, and dominate, the atmosphere of the schools. They need not. Schools can be made an oasis of acceptance, a haven sheltering and cushioning neglected children from the cruel realities of their lives in blighted communities. This they must do if they are to increase the academic achievement of these children.

It would be reasonable to conclude that neglected and inefficient public schools have become the principal, the most specific, and the most direct agent for the perpetuation of the cycle of social, racial, and economic injustices, of community pathology, and of urban instability. In the light of this perspective, mobilization of the necessary resources to raise the efficiency of the public schools to a level of high standards and high academic performance would not only solve the problem of chronic academic retardation but would be the first serious step toward achieving a democracy of fact rather than of words.

The educational design presented in this report is based upon the following related premises, which are supported by the best available evidence:

1. A normal child will learn if he is properly stimulated and taught.

2. Groups of normal children, if properly stimulated and taught, will learn according to individual differences, as reflected by a normal distribution curve of achievement.

3. The rate of learning of normal children can be positively or negatively manipulated by a number of factors, such as adult expectations, encouragement or discouragement, acceptance or rejection, compassion or humiliation. It is now generally known, on the basis of observation and systematic research findings, that if a normal child is disparaged and if adults communicate to him, directly or subtly, that he is unable to, and not expected to learn, he, usually, will not learn. This educational version of the self-fulfilling prophecy probably plays a crucial determining role in the widespread academic retardation of rejected lower-status and minority group children in the public schools of large American cities. It is, in fact, the most specific way in which the complex pattern of social and racial discrimination intervenes in the educational process, accounting for much of the academic retardation of these children.

4. Fortunately, in a representative sample of human beings, organically deficient human beings comprise a relatively small percentage of any representative group; their deficiencies are relatively easy to diagnose and, certainly, could not account for the massive academic retardation found in lower-status public schools of American cities.

5. Specific, and a general pattern of external interferences, such as noise, poor lighting, inadequate ventilation and so on, could reduce the academic achievement of normal children. It is reasonable to assume that when such interferences are identified and corrected or eliminated, the normal child will begin to learn.

6. Whatever the reasons or constellation of reasons responsible for learning retardation in normal children, if these reasons are not identified and corrected, academic retardation will be cumulative as these children grow older and are passed on from grade to grade; but if these interferences are identified and corrected, normal children will begin to learn at an accelerated rate until they reach or surpass their age-grade level.

7. While it is possible for children of exceptional and superior intelligence to take the initiative in determining

their own rapid rate of academic learning, the average child requires skilled, compassionate, and stimulating teaching in order to reach or approach and fulfill his maximum academic potential.

8. An analysis of successful "compensatory" or "educational enrichment" programs reveals that these programs are "successful" only when they succeed in imposing upon a particular school and classroom the pattern of essential ingredients of an effective educational program--systematic and specifically defined sequentially developed curricula; high expectations for the students, and acceptance of them as individuals who can perform in terms of high standards; effective teaching and diligent supervision; and regular evaluation and reinforcement of strengths.

9. Although there is, at present, no evidence that entire large city public school systems can raise significantly the academic achievement of the children in all of its public schools, simply because none has, there is evidence, to date, that individual schools and relatively small school districts can and have done so. The design offered in this report was developed, and is presented in the belief that these observations of successful programs provide insights for and can serve

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as the basis for a successful systemwide educational program. Given the harsh reality that the problem of increasing academic retardation of the children in big city public schools has not yet been solved, and that the downward trend has not yet been halted and reversed on a systemwide basis, it is obvious that no proposed comprehensive educational program can guarantee success with complete confidence. However, there is no evidence from effective programs that suggests that their effectiveness cannot be duplicated in larger units if the characteristics of effectiveness are duplicated.

It might be helpful to state some of the conditions of effectiveness which would seem to increase the chances of eventual success of educational programs in raising and sustaining the academic achievement of the children in the schools of a large city public school system. A proposed program for a strategy of change to be implemented by the Board of Education of Washington, D.C., should meet the following requirements, among others:

--It must take into account the complex social, psychological, educational, political, and fiscal realities which must be manipulated in order to obtain the desired change.

--It must be practical, concrete, and measurable.

--It must be free of the litany of excuses, blame, and fault-finding; nor can it succumb to theoretical abstractions, resort to fads and gimmicks or educational jargon more likely to confuse and procrastinate rather than to clarify objectives and methods required to bring about the necessary changes.

--It dare no longer resort to the luxuries of "further investigation," "pilot" and "demonstration" projects, random experimentation, profound theorizing, and other devices of postponement.

--It must be implementable. No matter how brilliant and ideal a program, if it cannot be implemented within the the limitations of reality, it will not benefit children who now suffer educational injury. For example, a realistic program cannot demand that mere human beings be replaced by superhuman paragons as teachers and administrators, and certainly it would be absurd, and, probably, a most subtle device to continue to design a comprehensive academic achievement program for Washington, D.C. which would require within the next year an educational budget two or three times the scope of the present budget.

--It must be clear in its statement of goals of the overall design; it should spell out specific objectives and expectations in the attainment of the goals; it must suggest general directions and concrete ways in which these objectives can be pursued and attained and sustained; it must suggest methods of evaluation and accountability in determining the pace of change and efficiency in seeking objectives; it requires a reasonable time schedule for the attainment of these objectives and the overall goal.

IV. A DESIGN FOR THE EFFECTIVE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN IN THE WASHINGTON, D.C. PUBLIC SCHOOLS

The specific goal of this project is to define the processes and conditions under which it would be possible to provide for the children in the public schools of the District of Columbia the highest quality of education that is available to children anywhere in the United States. Probably the most important determinant of MARC's decision to accept the invitation of the Board of Education of Washington, D.C. to become involved in this educational project --and certainly the source of the sustained enthusiasm and energy which dominated the work of those who participated in it was the unquestioned acceptance of the belief that it is possible to attain and sustain the standards, conditions, and requirements essential for educational excellence in the public schools of Washington, D.C. It is our fundamental assumption that there are no rational reasons why urban public schools cannot or should not provide for their students a quality of education equal to or superior to that allegedly provided for students in the most prestigious private and public schools.

This stark statement of the goal of unqualified educational excellence for public schools with a large percentage of lower status children will understandably be questioned, if not ridiculed, by many, precisely because the existing educational stagnation in these schools is accepted as the norm, if not the

ceiling. Certainly, it could be argued that a due respect for cautious realism, supported by the history of past educational failure of these public schools, would suggest a more modest statement of educational goals. This project, nonetheless, demands the goal of attainment of educational excellence in the public schools because to do less--to be more "realistic"--would require us, in effect, to be unrealistic, to make recommendations and suggestions which could only result in a repetition of the limitations, the frustrations, and the failures exemplified in the numerous "special compensatory programs" for the "disadvantaged" and other types of educational "pilot" and "demonstration" program gimmicks or attempts to tinker with individual components of the system.

Furthermore, it could be argued that a failure to state the goal in terms of educational excellence for urban public schools--a failure rooted in the pervasive belief that such excellence is unobtainable, unthinkable, and unrealistic, if not impossible--may not only have prevented the development and implementation of serious educational programs in urban schools, but may also be the most critical, though subtle, determinant of the process of educational deterioration and stagnation which has characterized public schools in the nation's cities during the past three or four decades. This is the manifestation of the self-fulfilling prophecy on the level of the educational system as a whole.

Educational excellence for public schools is, of course, not achieved by the mere articulation of this goal--indeed, claims that excellence has been attained are not infrequent in the rhetoric of annual reports to Boards of Education, particularly in response to demands for mere educational adequacy. The usual discrepancy between the glittering words and the illusive actuality of simple educational efficiency--and the almost total absence of educational excellence--demonstrates that it is far easier to manipulate words than to change educational conditions. A serious design to establish educational excellence in urban public schools must, therefore, provide specific guidelines designed not only to arrest the subtle and flagrant determinants of the momentum toward failure, but also to stimulate new determinants for a momentum toward success.

In attempting to devise a serious design it is necessary to ascertain the significant ingredients of quality education; to define the specific objectives which must be obtained and sustained; and to suggest those changes (modifications) in policy, procedure, and organizational structure which seem required for the attainment of the specific and interrelated objectives and the overall goal.

It is now axiomatic that no educational design, no matter how carefully and creatively designed, is self-implementing. A successful transition from design to implementation with increased chances of demonstrable success seems dependent upon a network of interdependent,

enthusiastic, and realistic supports of the various groups involved in the policy, leadership, and day-to-day operation of the educational process; a total commitment of mind and spirit and resources; and a demonstration that the suggested program meets the tests of concreteness and specificity, that is, that it is possible and implementable.

The most important and severe test of the seriousness and relevance of any suggested educational design is that it demonstrate, through frequent and periodic and objective evaluation, observable, and hopefully dramatic, improvement in the academic achievement of the children in the schools which the program is intended to serve.

General observation and analysis of the educational literature, and specific research into effective programs suggest that effectiveness must be defined and ensured in the following components of the educational process:

--Curriculum;

--Educational personnel--teachers, supervisors, administrators, counselors, educational aides, and tutors;

--Parents and other significant adults;

--Students and their peers;

--The nature and efficiency of the governance, administrative and organizational structure and supports;

--The quality, atmosphere, and human climate, perspective, and philosophy of the school and the educational system of which it is a part.

The educational design proposed in this report addresses itself to each of these components. It is important to emphasize, however, that while it is necessary to present the overall design in terms of requisites directed toward the specific components, there is an inevitable and significant overlap and interdependence among them --common principles underlie the suggestions in the various components.

Given the fact that success or failure in the educational process of a school or a public school system is likely to reflect the nature and dynamics of the total system rather than merely the pluses or minuses of an isolated part, and given the fact that complex systems function in terms of the inviolable interrelatedness and interdependence of their parts, no one set of recommendations or suggestions in this report isolated from the pattern of other recommendations can be reasonably expected to attain maximum success in moving toward the goal of providing for these children the highest quality of education it is possible to design, create,

and sustain. It is not likely that significant and observable improvement in the academic achievement of the children in a public school system will be attained unless it is possible to modify, mobilize, and reorganize all of the components of that system toward that goal. In our judgment, the pursuit of any other course is the pursuit of an illusion, and, therefore, should not and cannot be taken seriously by thoughtful and concerned observers.

CURRICULUM

Curriculum may be most simply defined as the substance or content of what a child is expected to learn.

Generally, what one expects a child to learn is determined by empirical evidence of what normal children of a particular age and grade do, in fact, learn when they are exposed to content and encouraged to learn. Most normal children tend to learn in a reasonable period of time what they are expected to learn and what they are encouraged and taught to learn. Upon the basis of available psychological evidence related to the educational and learning process, it is possible to control the rate of learning of a normal child, upward or downward, by a modification--an enrichment or dilution--of the curriculum; by increasing or decreasing the skill of presentation; or by raising or lowering one's standards and expectations and demands

in regard to the child's learning ability. (See Appendix pp. 28-51.)

The basic academic skills which must be effectively taught in the elementary grades are reading, oral and written communication and mathematics, since these skills are essential for academic success in the later grades, and necessary for a constructive, competitive, and contributory adult role in the economy and the society as a whole. Certainly, they are imperative as the basis of any realistic pride, general competence, and self respect.

Of these fundamental skills, probably the most basic in the elementary grades is the specific skill in reading, since it is clear that success in math and in oral and written communication depends upon it. It is not likely that a child will be successful academically if he is permitted to be deficient in the reading skills of word recognition and reading comprehension.

It would follow, therefore, that in seeking to attain academic excellence in the public schools, concentrated emphasis in curriculum development and teaching be placed upon developing reading skills in the primary grades to the highest level of achievement possible.

Requisites:

1. Given the primacy of reading in the attainment of academic success, the first step in the attempt to reverse past inadequacies and failures and attain educational excellence in

the public school system in Washington, D.C. is for that system to constitute the next immediate academic year as a system-wide Reading Mobilization Year. For a period of at least one year, the entire curriculum will be geared to increasing competence in reading and reading comprehension and will be supervised, guided and evaluated by reading teams for each school. These teams will consist of reading specialists, classroom teachers, and consultants from universities and teacher-training schools, and will work in cooperation with elementary supervisors and the principals of each school. It is suggested that all extracurricular activities, e.g., dramatics, chorus, newspapers, and special clubs, even athletics, be organized around and each to emphasize reading, and precise written and oral communication. In early childhood programs, the focus must be on cognitive skills. (See Appendix, pp. 5-28.)

2. The Reading Mobilization Teams in each school, in concert with teachers in workshops and seminars will assume the responsibilities for planning and implementing the specifics of the comprehensive reading program, selecting a variety of materials appropriate to grade levels; determining the methods which will be used in motivating and teaching the students to read, write, and speak with clarity and comprehension; providing the necessary support and training to raise the overall professional competence of

teachers in the teaching of reading; and evaluating the effectiveness of the agreed-upon curriculum, materials, methods and quality of teaching in terms of observable and measurable improvements in the students' achievement. The teams should be prepared to make whatever modifications in plans and procedures the ongoing evaluations suggest are necessary.

3. The uncompromisable objectives of the Reading Mobilization Year in each school in the system must be:

   First, to remedy all present cases of reading retardation among normal children in the school so that each achieves at grade level or above.

   Second, to see that every normal child entering the school system will function and continue to function at or above grade level in reading and related academic skills.

   Third, to determine empirically, through the attainment of the first two objectives, the highest level of reading skills actually attainable by classes of normal children, without regard to their present age, I.Q. label, grade level, or current national norms. In other words, new and higher norms would be established.

4. It is necessary that, in devising the overall curriculum, including reading, designed to provide the highest quality of education and raise dramatically the academic achievement of the children in the public schools, the following requirements be met:

--Designation of clear, specific, and high standards of what the system expects normal children to learn at each grade level, and the communication of these expectations to every child, every teacher, and every parent.

--Establishment of systemwide minimum floors of achievement, in content learning and skill mastery, appropriate to the age and grade of normal children, and that these expectations be adhered to, and obtained from each child.

--Encouragement of flexibility, creativity, and imagination in the teacher's choice of curriculum beyond the minimal curriculum content and the minimum expectations of achievement.

--Provision of immediate success with reward and reinforcement to facilitate the learning and skill-mastery for each child.

5. Specifically, the following requirements seem imperative to achieve initial success in the teaching and learning of reading:

--The teacher must have adequate professional training in behavioral development diagnosis, remediation, and familiarity with a variety of methods and materials in order to assure his own competence and confidence.

--Continued training and professional support on-the-job must be provided to teachers in ways which are consistent with personal and professional dignity.

--The expectations for teacher achievement, like the expectations for student achievment, must be clear, specific, attainable, and challenging.

--Materials used in the initial and early stages must be stimulating and specifically oriented toward the sequential development of reading skills; e.g., the repeated association of the visual stimulus of the letters of the alphabet and combination of letters with specific sounds.

--The natural curiosity and interest of children can be

constructively exploited to involve the children as active participants in the excitement and exhilaration which are possible in the process of learning to read. A cycle of success and self-confidence must be developed as the child is encouraged to learn and as he develops a sense of pride arising out of the reality of success, discovery, and skill mastery. This sense of confidence can be further supported by involving the children in the preparation and modification of curriculum materials.

--In regard to those early childhood programs designed specifically to stimulate capacity to read--most do not--the evidence suggests that, despite their frequent popularity, they cannot be seen as substitutes for continued systematic efforts to teach reading in the elementary grades. Indeed, research indicates that early pre-school gains in cognitive development are not sustained in the elementary grades unless intensive intervention to reinforce achievement occurs in those grades. As noted above, no specific program appears to be effective, taken alone.

6. Advocates of various methods of teaching reading tend to deprecate the effectiveness of methods not their own and sometimes suggest or assert that the crisis in reading retardation is due to reliance on a competing method.

While the available evidence on the efficiency of any particular method over all others does not seem conclusive, and while the bias of this report leans toward favoring the basic phonics approach to the teaching of reading in the early elementary grades, it is the considered judgment of those involved in this project that a particular method of teaching or a particular set of materials is not, in itself, the determining factor in the success of teaching and learning to read. (See Appendix, pp. 28-48.) Therefore, instead of specific recommendations on method or materials, it is suggested that the Reading Mobilization Team

in each school, discussed above, determine the choice of methods and materials and be free to experiment with as much flexibility as seems indicated by the learning needs of the individual children. The test of the effectiveness of any method must be and remain the overriding, the dominant fact of the actual academic achievement of an intellectually normal child.

7. In regard to oral and written communication, it is recommended that these skills integral to the reading process be taught and emphasized as critical components of the Reading Mobilization Year program. Every attempt should be made to expose the children to the wonder and beauty of language and to develop in them a respect for the precise meaning, use, and pronunciation of words as the vehicles of expression and communication of ideas and feelings. It is possible to develop these insights in very young children as a part of the adventure of their own beginning use of language.

8. Concerning the teaching of the prevailing dialect or permitting mispronunciations or grammatical license, while the evidence indicates that the language used in low-income areas of our cities and nation--and often elsewhere as well--does reflect such practices, it is the judgment of this report that this is not a function of schools. If those who are in

control of policy and professional quality in the public schools are indeed serious in a desire to raise the quality of education in those schools toward a level of excellence, one of their first obligations is to see that the English language is taught effectively, and respected and learned by all children in their schools. The basic function of schools is to correct deficiencies which would remain uncorrected were it not for the schools. Language, written and, particularly, oral communication, is a badge of caste and class and upward mobility--for better or for worse. It is an obvious fact that the dialect of the ghettos, and all other dialects, are not now, nor are they likely to be in the foreseeable future, occupationally or academically competitive. They are personal, social, and economic handicaps which can and should be corrected by the schools.

9. It is also, therefore, urged that one specialist on each Reading Mobilization Team be assigned the responsibility of designing and implementing a program to raise the quality of the written and spoken language of the children in that school, including curricular and such extracurricular activities as debates, discussion groups, dramatic presentations, school newspapers and magazines, and other activities suggested by the students themselves.

10. In the zeal to raise the level of achievement of students in the basic skills of reading and oral and written communication, one cannot afford to permit retardation in mathematics and at the same time remain faithful to the overall goal of obtaining academic excellence in the public schools. As a matter of fact, skill in mathematics is dependent upon reading and is itself a form of communication. Indeed, one could transform the argument or demand to teach English as a "second language" by insisting upon the teaching of mathematics as the "second language" in the public elementary schools.

    It is, therefore, necessary that specific systemwide minimum grade-level goals, and appropriate syllabi, be developed for the teaching of mathematics.

11. It is recommended that the goals in mathematics be implemented by the same process as suggested for reading in Recommendation 2, above, of a Mathematics Team of teachers supported by specialists and consultants from universities and teachers' colleges. The specific responsibilities of the mathematics task force in each school will include:

    --Revision and updating of a mathematics curriculum for each grade and school.

--Determination of the support and further training needed by each teacher and supervisor to increase her professional skill in the teaching of mathematics, and provision of that support and training in content and methodology necessary for teaching effectiveness, particularly in the elementary grades.

--Development of a system of supervision and ongoing evaluation consistent with professional dignity and teaching and learning success.

--Finding or developing instruments for diagnosing and correcting problems of individual students which block the learning of the language of mathematics.

A number of special reading and mathematics programs in deprived area schools have, in the past, been initiated and many have failed. It is the opinion of the project group that the only explanation for this failure that is consistent with the evidence is the probability that such programs have been initiated in isolation from other essential ingredients required for effective achievement in a school or in a school system. No individual program, however intensive, and no particular factor will work alone, in isolation from related and necessary changes in the system as a whole. Without such organizational changes, the educational system cannot maintain even initial gains achieved by such programs. It is crucial, therefore, that the massive Reading Mobilization Year, and the mathematics program, must be seen as parts of a whole, single factors among many which, taken together, and only so, comprise an effective educational program.

EDUCATIONAL PERSONNEL

Teachers:

Without question, if there is a single most important factor which determines success or failure in attempts to achieve the goal of educational excellence--to assure that each child is, in fact, learning up to the maximum level consistent with his potentialities --it is the critical role of the teacher. The classroom teacher is the central point upon which all other aspects of educational quality converge. Indeed, the total pattern of requisites and recommendations dealing with curriculum, administrative policies, procedures, and organization, students and parents presented in this report may be seen as contributing to educational effectiveness only insofar as they support and contribute to the effectiveness of the classroom teacher through increasing professional competence, personal confidence, and sustained effectiveness as these are reflected in the observable academic achievement of the students.

It should be embarrassing to state the obvious fact that the teaching profession is the most important profession in any complex and civilized society, and that all other professions are necessarily dependent upon teaching.

Given this inevitable and inescapable pivotal role of teachers, at all levels of that profession, it is difficult to understand how a highly developed scientific and technologically dominated society ever permitted the teaching profession--particularly elementary and secondary school teaching--to be relegated to a comparatively inferior level of prestige and status.

At the heart of any serious program designed to attain academic excellence in the public schools there must be a realistic formula to reverse this fact of low status for teachers and to plan and implement programs and institute necessary procedures to raise the status, prestige, and effectiveness of the teaching profession. Given the complexity of historical, economic, psychological, and other forces which have determined the present negative status of that profession, it will not be easy to reverse this, and to substitute in its place positive self-image and unquestioned general respect for professionally competent teachers. But this must be done--and soon.

Events of recent years suggest that the imperative need to raise the status and effectiveness of the teaching profession cannot be met merely by salary increases--upgrading the economic status of the profession--important as this is, and as long delayed as the assumption of responsibility to reduce the discrepancy between

teachers and other comparable professions has been. Nor can teachers themselves be asked to upgrade the status and effectiveness of their profession through sentimentalistic appeals for "dedication", "self-sacrifice", and "social sensitivity", when these admirable human qualities are not, in fact, supported by economic, situational, training, and supervisory realities conducive to professional effectiveness and status. Certainly, such appeals required supporting realities to achieve effectiveness, prestige, and status for other professions, such as medicine and law.

Essential to any serious program for the attainment of the highest level of respect for the teaching profession are the following:

--Preassignment preparation and continued training on-the-job.

--Continued evaluation of performance.

--Dignified and professional supervision.

--Healthy and positive relations between teachers and supervisors, administrators, educational aides, parents, and foremost, of course, their students.

--Differential staffing and career development and rewards for teachers in terms of their training, ongoing objective evaluations, and demonstrable performance, as indicated by the academic achievement of their students.

Almost no student or concerned observer of the problems of large

urban public school systems would now question the need for a rigorous reexamination and reformation of existing teacher training programs and teacher certification procedures. Traditional approaches to the training of teachers in most, if not all, schools of education are clearly holdovers from a past and relatively simple society and educational system, and do not appear to meet the needs of a rapidly changing, complex, and demanding technological society. It is probably not an exaggeration to assert that most teachers are being now prepared for the teaching profession as if they were to teach in the urban schools of the 1920's, or even in the rural "little red school house." The apparent greater success and seeming competence of these teachers, when they function in suburban schools, may be merely a reflection of the artificial hothouse isolation of these suburban schools, in which such deficiencies as the anachronistic training of their teachers are not apparent.

Nonetheless, there remains the obvious and mocking fact that the turbulence, the complexities, and the ferment of contemporary cities demand more of urban public schools, including a higher level of professional competence from teachers, with training that begins to reflect contemporary, and irreversible, urban, social, scientific, and technological realities. So far, the majority of teacher training institutions, their curricula and their methods,

do not seem sensitive or responsive to this simple educational fact.

Priorities:

Given the imperative need to upgrade the status, prestige, and effectiveness of the teaching profession, these priorities are necessary:

12. One of the first procedures for the Board of Education and its professional staff, under this program, should be to invite appropriate representatives from universities and teacher-training institutions in the Washington, D.C. area to a series of conferences or seminars to begin the discussion of:

--A systematic reexamination of existing teacher training programs, including the relative time and attention given to methods courses, as distinct from courses in substance and content.

--The extent to which, and the reasons why, the training of teachers should or should not be different from the training of students of students of liberal arts and sciences, and must now include--in the light of the effect of contemporary problems on the educational process in the public schools--greater emphasis on social sciences such as sociology, anthropology, and social psychology.

--Ways in which teacher expectations for student performance can be stimulated positively through teacher education programs, in teacher training and on-the-job, in terms of the important findings of systematic studies that teacher expectations are a most critical factor in student academic achievement. Teachers should be exposed to the research literature and case studies and to actual laboratory classroom situations which support these findings. (See Appendix, pp. 57-61.)

--Ways in which necessary changes in preparatory training and on-the-job training can be implemented in cooperation with universities, teacher education institutions, and public schools.

13. Closely related to the problem of teacher training is the problem of teacher certification. According to current practices, large urban public school systems tend to certify teachers who have taken the required courses, met the degree requirements of the teacher training institution and, in some cases, demonstrated additional competence by passing a local examination. It is the considered judgment of the project group that this ritualized system of teacher certification, tied as it is to an anachronistic system of teacher training, must be modified. If the modification is to increase the status and effectiveness of the teacher profession, it should move in the direction of the reformation of the program suggested by Abraham Flexner, in regard to medical education, which resulted in the monumental contribution of upgrading of the training and certification of physicians. (Medical Education in the United States, Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, New York, 1910.)

Specifically, it is pointed out that, in any contemporary plan for the certification of teachers, it be recognized that even as the granting of the M.D. degree to a young person does not automatically qualify him to practice medicine without further supervised training--an internship--it should be recognized that the granting of an A. B. or B. S. degree in

education does not automatically qualify an individual to be certified as an independent teacher. Certainly, the future lives and destiny of children are as precious and demand as many safeguards as the health and survival of patients.

14. It is, therefore, a requisite that the beginning teacher continue to be supervised and supported during the first three years of assignment to classroom teaching. This initial period of on-the-job supervision would be, in effect, an extension and deepening of the student-teaching experience. The responsibility for this type of continued training and supervision would be borne jointly by personnel in the colleges and universities and the professional personnel of the school system.

It might be of value to designate this beginning status--the entering career level of the teaching profession, similar to that of a medical intern and resident--as Resident Teacher.

At this entering level of Resident Teacher, individuals would be rigorously and professionally supervised and evaluated, and would receive more flexible assignments and laboratory and seminar training as part of the primary

classroom responsibilities and as practical supports for personal and professional growth and effectiveness.

The certification of the teacher would become a reality after, rather than at the beginning of, the Resident Teacher status. A Resident Teacher could be certified, hopefully, at the end of the minimal period of three years--but no later than five years--after systematic assessment of the teacher's strengths and weaknesses, much after the manner of the proposal for certification from Robert Bhaerman, Director of Research of the American Federation of Teachers. (AFT QuEST Paper 7, n.d., p. 7.) With certification there should be evidence of an increase of confidence, professional security, and overall effectiveness as a teacher. The demonstration of such professional growth and teaching effectiveness should automatically entitle the Resident Teacher to promotion to the next level on the career ladder suggested immediately below.

15. Some students of the problem of complex educational systems have dared to suggest a system of differential staffing as a major step toward increasing the status of the teaching profession and thereby raising the educational efficiency of public schools. (See Appendix, pp. 90-107.)

This report accepts this rationale and concurs with this recommendation. It is, hereby, recommended that the Board of Education of Washington, D.C. institute the first phases of a program by which certified teachers be eventually classified and rewarded on the basis of rank. To be of educational value, it would follow that the rank and rewards of a teacher could not be determined merely by longevity or by the mere collection of credits in graduate courses, but by demonstration of the teacher's ability to raise the academic achievement of his pupils and to contribute to the professional growth of his peers.

The following four-rank stage is suggested:

--Resident Teacher, described above;

--Staff (or Experienced, or Certified) Teacher;

--Senior Teacher;

--Master Teacher.

A Staff or Certified Teacher would continue some relationship with the personnel of collaborative colleges and universities, would contribute to the professional development of peers and Resident Teachers, and would be primarily evaluated in terms of demonstrated ability to contribute to high academic achievement of the students. The Staff or

Certified Teacher would be roughly equivalent in rank to an Assistant Professor in a university.

The third level of professional rank, the Senior Teacher, would be similar in rank to Associate Professor. Individuals would be promoted to this rank in terms of meeting the same or higher standards of evaluation for previous promotions plus the demonstration of that level of personal and professional maturity which would be attested to by peers in the teaching profession, by supervisors, and parents. General reputation, based upon realistic assessments and consistent performance, should be an important standard to be met before a teacher attains this rank. The upper range of compensation of the Senior Teacher should be at least equal to the compensation provided for Assistant Principals and other supervisory and administrative individuals of this rank.

16. The highest professional rank to be achieved by members of the teaching profession in this suggested schema is that of Master Teacher. To be of maximum motivational value and in order to increase the chances that the individuals who attain this rank are being, in fact, rewarded for outstanding performance as a teacher, this rank should be reserved for truly distinguished, imaginative,

creative, and consistently effective teachers. Master Teachers must be required to demonstrate their right to this status, which is equivalent to that of a full Professor, by their ability to help other teachers fulfill their professional potentials and, above all, by the evidence that their students are stimulated to learn, are held to highest standards, and achieve up to and beyond general expectations. Actual nomination and promotion to the rank of Master Teacher should be made on the basis of the enthusiastic consensus of the teacher's peers in a given school, the supervisors, and concerned parents. The compensation of the Master Teacher should be at least equal to that of a Principal.

The rank of Distinguished Teacher should be available to those extraordinary teachers in a public school system who have demonstrated their skills as a teacher not only in terms of the standards for attaining the rank of Master Teacher, but also in terms of their contributions to the standards and quality of the educational profession nationally. The percentage of individuals to whom this rank is awarded by the system should be no greater than the number of individuals who receive the rank of Distinguished Professor in a large university. Their

remuneration should be at least equal to that of assistant and associate superintendents.

If this proposed schema for differential staffing and reward for differential contributions to the educational process is seriously considered, adopted, and the steps taken to implement it, it will be necessary to see that certain conditions prevail and that certain safeguards are maintained if the chances of success are to be increased and the chances of failure decreased or eliminated.

For example, it is imperative that the ranges of salary within each rank be appropriate to the demands of that rank and time of service in the position, and, realistically, it would not be possible to require that any individual presently in the system suffer economically, nor could such individuals be legally required to relinquish their rights of tenure.

Appropriate safeguards of due process, rights of review and control and protection against arbitrary administrative, supervisory, and other abuses of the evaluation and promotional process must be developed and objectively and justly enforced.

This design persists in seeking to recognize and reward, in a realistic and protected way, the potential and the actuality of teaching excellence, as determined by the judgment of peers, supervisors, parents, and by the academic performance of their students.

The staged implementation of this plan to increase the status and effectiveness of the teaching profession, through a realistic system of professional ranks and differential rewards, could contribute to the eventual solution of some major problems which seem related to the present stagnation of urban public education. At present, teachers cannot expect to attain the higher salary scales available in the educational system by remaining within the teaching profession. Higher salaries are reserved for supervisors and administrators. This ceiling upon the salaries and status of teachers requires teachers to move from teaching as a career to seek the economic and status rewards reserved only for administrators. The formula suggested here would make it possible for teachers to continue their professional development and contributions within the career of the teaching profession itself.

This plan would also meet another pervasive inequity accepted

universally within educational systems; namely, salary discrimination based upon sex. At present, most teachers are females and most supervisors and administrators are males. As previously indicated, the present salary levels and ceilings for teachers are consistently below the salary levels for supervisors. This sex-caste discrimination has contributed to the fact that males tend to shun elementary and secondary school teaching as a career, and the related fact that males tend to gravitate toward the higher paying supervisory and administrative roles. Indeed, the top supervisory positions in large urban public school systems are, in fact, a male monopoly.

The plan of differential rank and appropriate differential reward according to rank could contribute to raising the overall status, prestige, and effectiveness of teachers; could stabilize and increase the economic base of teachers with the salary for senior ranks of teachers approaching parity with the salary of supervisors, thereby, enhancing the career development potential of the teaching profession and attracting a higher proportion of males to a career in teaching.

Executives:

Even as one asserts the paramount importance of the classroom teacher in determining the quality of education provided for children in the elementary and secondary schools, one cannot ignore the fact that an efficient public school system requires competent executives as important agents in helping to attain and sustain educational effectiveness. (See Appendix, pp. 77-81.)

Indeed, some of the evidence examined as bases for this report suggests strongly that the quality of education observed in a given school is largely a function of the competence and characteristics of that school seen as a total unit, and that leadership in that school is the significant factor in the efficiency of that unit, as determined by high student achievement. There is also evidence that the same is true for school districts: there, a high level of academic achievement of the children in the schools comprising the district seems directly related to the clarity, the compassion, the sensitivity, and the overall professional qualities of the district superintendent.

It is clear, therefore, that any serious attempt to improve dramatically the academic achievement of the children in a public school system must address itself specifically to the

essential role of executives at various levels, in the functioning of a modern and complex urban public school system. Requisites in this area must, therefore, deal with the critical problems of defining those characteristics which are necessary for effective executives (defined here as the range between principal and superintendent); determining the problems which interfere with this effectiveness; eliminating those interferences, and instituting those procedures for the training and motivation of executives which are designed to increase effectiveness.

17. It is, therefore, important that the Board of Education of Washington, D.C. institute a program, through which the chief executive officer of the system, the Superintendent of Schools, will appoint a small working task force of knowledgeable individuals within the system, members of the community, and individuals from teacher-training institutions to identify the effective principals, supervisors, and superintendents who are now functioning within the system. The characteristics of these identified individuals would be examined and compared with the characteristics of average and inadequate supervision. As superior executives are identified, these individuals would be encouraged and rewarded and brought into a systematic program designed to raise the level of professional performance of less adequate executives in ways

consistent with the professional dignity of the individuals involved. The strengths of all executives should be reinforced through such a program, and the weaknesses identified and eliminated as rapidly as possible.

Eventually, it would be the unenviable responsibility of a working peer group of executives to determine which executives seem unable to profit from an agreed-upon systematic program to increase their effectiveness, and to recommend, in consequence, that such individuals be transferred to other duties and responsibilities which do not directly bear upon the effectiveness of teachers and the academic performance of the students.

18. A common and increasing complaint heard from executives at levels is that administrative and clerical responsibilities leave little time for the crucial responsibility of educational leadership.

At each level of educational executive leadership from principal to superintendent, therefore, the educational leader will be provided with an administrative deputy, and administrative assistants, where necessary. Administrative deputies and assistants, designated as Educational Administrators, would be specifically and exclusively responsible for administrative, day-to-day problems of

obtaining supplies, equipment, and maintenance, record-keeping, and so on, thereby freeing the top educational supervisor of the school, the school district, or the school system to devote his energies almost exclusively to problems of education, particularly to support and facilitate the educational role of the teachers.

It should be clearly understood that this recommendation does not imply dual or parallel educational responsibility and authority. The final responsibility for the operation and the efficiency of the school, school district, or school system must remain in the hands of the principal, assistant superintendents, and superintendent, respectively. This is essential because all administrative decisions in a school or a public school system have educational implications, and the basic function of administration and administrators in an efficient public school system is to facilitate the educational process, rather than to interfere with or to seek to control it.

It would, therefore, be the responsibility of the chief educational executive in the system, the superintendent, and the chief educator in all units of that system to see that the administrators assigned to them do, in fact, operate as

facilitators of the educational process. With this type of nominal and functional reorganization of the executive structure of public school systems, the principals, assistant superintendents, and superintendents will be free to serve as catalysts for high quality of education. Under these conditions, they will be able to select potentially competent teachers, participate in programs of support of the positive potential of all teachers, work with parents and community groups toward obtaining the highest quality of education for all of the children in the public schools, and maintain the positive atmosphere of compassion, cooperation, and involvement essential to the attainment of educational excellence in each school.

Educational Aides (Para-Professionals):

Within recent years a movement has developed and spread toward the use of para-professionals (this report prefers the more affirmative term, Educational Aides) as assistants to teachers or as community aides in large public schools. This movement seems to stem not only from practical needs for teacher assistance, but from a recognition of the fact that with the increasing complexity of the problems of large urban public school systems and the increasing demands upon classroom teachers, adults who are not teachers can provide important help in meeting the educational and school-related

needs of the children. (See Appendix, pp. 86-89.)

The role of Educational Aides would seem to be parallel to that of medical aides, nurses' aides, medical assistants, and other supportive technicians. Educational Aides in the public schools throughout the country. are assigned to a variety of supportive functions, including assisting teachers and working with individual children in the classroom, assisting educational supervisors and administrators in the school, assisting librarians, counselors, and other non-teaching professionals, supervising the activities of the students in study periods, on the playground, and other extracurricular or after-school homework or study sessions, and serving as liaison between the community and the school.

Requisites:

19. Given the fact that there has been an expressed and actual need for adults who could aid and support the classroom teacher and thereby enhance the teacher's primary educational effectiveness, it is recommended that a more intensive, and more systematic program for the recruitment, training, and significant use of Educational Aides be developed and implemented by the Washington, D.C. public school system. In order to provide for the most

effective use of the cadre of Educational Aides and to assure that their contributions are, in fact, geared toward the primary goal of this overall educational program--namely, to demonstrate an increase in the academic achievement of the students in the public schools--the following conditions are necessary:

--In the selection and training and assignment of Educational Aides, it must be clearly understood that the primary responsibility for the educational process in the classroom is held by the teacher, and it is, therefore, essential that the teacher play the determining role in the selection of the particular Aide or Aides assigned to him.

--All Educational Aides assigned to a particular school should be, as far as possible, parents or other individuals drawn from the community served by each school, in order to facilitate the desired goal of increasing the involvement of parents and other concerned individuals in the activities of the school.

--Educational Aides require intensive training for their role and teachers need training in the effective use of aides so that each may play a positive, mutually-reinforcing role in the educational process, and a role consistent with their dignity as human beings and with full recognition of their contribution to the attainment of the goal of the highest quality of education which can be provided.

--Conditions conducive for mutual respect among teachers, supervisors, and Educational Aides must prevail. Specifically, the positive contributions of Educational Aides would be impaired by such arbitrary status distinctions as occurs in certain other cities as requiring them to use separate bathroom and eating facilities.

--Educational Aides should be provided every opportunity, indeed, should be encouraged, as indicated by the capacity of the individual and his own interests, to develop their skills by further education or professional training so that they may move along the career ladder available to the classroom teachers. If their classroom experience as

paraprofessionals is similar to that required for student teaching, course credit for field work as Aides should be explored.

It should be made clear that there are realistic opportunities for developing the skills of the individual who demonstrates the capacity to profit from further training, without any arbitrary and fixed ceilings upon professional mobility. Indeed, it is suggested that the role of the Educational Aide, itself, can be even more effective if it is seen to operate as part of the educational process by which the individuals are, themselves, educated systematically as they assist in the education of their children.

20. Systematic efforts should also be made to recruit and involve in the roles of Educational Aides as high a proportion as possible of males from communities served by the school. The present dearth of male teachers in the elementary grades could at least be partially compensated for by aggressive recruitment, training, and use of male Educational Aides. These men would not only serve as models for the male students in the school, but would, in consequence, be constructively involved in the important social process of education. It is, therefore, all the more necessary to ensure that the conditions essential to attract and hold male Educational Aides prevail in any serious program of this sort.

Tutors:

Ordinarily, tutoring programs are planned with the premise that tutors primarily benefit the students whom they tutor. In recent

years, a number of high schools and colleges have developed tutoring programs, thereby providing their students with an opportunity to make some specific contributions to the education of less privileged children. A few years ago a study of the effects of a tutoring program (See Appendix, p.110) revealed the surprising finding that the tutors themselves tended to benefit as much as, if not more, in academic terms than those students whom they tutored. This finding suggests that the traditional type of tutoring programs could be modified to rely not only on the usual relationship between more privileged middle-class children, who are usually the tutors, and less advantaged students, who are usually tutored, but expanded or altered so that less advantaged young people are recruited as tutors with the direct objective of improving their own academic achievement. Obviously, the students whom they tutor would not suffer from this arrangement; in fact, it may well be that the elimination of the socio-economic status gap between tutors and those tutored will lead to educational dividends for both groups.

Requisites:

21. Therefore, it is recommended that there be developed and instituted a systematic tutoring program to recruit students as tutors from the higher grades of each elementary or junior high school; to recruit high school students residing in the particular community in which the school is located;

and, also, wherever possible, to recruit college students who reside in that community. These tutors, particularly the older ones, could serve as additional assistants to Educational Aides to the classroom teachers. They could assist in classroom study periods, in tutoring, and in homework assignment sessions. This pool of older tutors could be systematically encouraged to consider a choice of the teaching profession, and assisted financially in such plans.

As in the case of the Educational Aides, the effective use of tutors, as determined by the increase in the academic achievement of the children in the public schools, would depend upon the ability of leadership to ensure that certain positive conditions prevail. Among the conditions which would seem to be necessary are these:

--The tutors must be selected carefully, in terms of their capacity to teach and their capacity to benefit academically from the program.

--They must be trained and oriented to identify compassionately with the students assigned to them.

--They must be capable of working cooperatively with classroom teachers, Educational Aides, and parents.

Given these conditions, tutors would be a most valuable asset in helping the students obtain high levels of academic

achievement, and would be expected to record significant achievement gains themselves. Again, it would be desirable to make a vigorous effort to recruit as many young males for the tutoring role as possible and make every effort to involve them in all phases of the educational process.

STUDENTS

As noted earlier, many of the theories which seek to explain the persistence of academic retardation of minority group and lower-status children explicitly assert, or implicitly suggest, that the basic deficiency is to be found in the students themselves and in their parents and families, and that, as a consequence of a host of background deprivation factors, these children cannot achieve beyond their present rate, no matter how professionally competent the teaching provided for them in the public schools. (See Appendix pp.117-135)

Given the frequency of these explanations, and the ease with which they tend to be accepted uncritically and disseminated by educators and others; and given the possibility that some, if not all, of these explanations might account for the academic retardation of certain otherwise normal children in the public schools; certain steps need to be taken:

Requisites:

22. The Board of Education of Washington, D.C. should immediately institute a system-wide diagnostic program designed to determine the number of children in the public schools who do, in fact, come to school hungry and those who have the type of visual, auditory and other types of sensory or physical defects which interfere with their ability to learn. Provisions should then be made to see that those children who come to school hungry are fed, either in their homes or at school; and that the school also intervene to see that all sensory and other defects which interfere with childrens' ability to learn are corrected.

23. The Board must address itself specifically to the problem of raising and sustaining the motivation to learn of the child whose natural curiosity and excitement about learning has been blocked by experiences of failure. In this regard, the whole thrust of this report is that the most realistic approach to the solution of this problem is to provide for these children the highest quality of education possible; to hold them to the highest standards and expectations; to provide for them well-trained, competent and compassionate teachers and an overall school atmosphere which radiates respect and acceptance of each child as inherently worthy of respect.

But because the evidence is clear that high student motivation, like pride and self-respect, cannot be sustained merely through words and preachments, it is recommended that in the actual educational process each child be provided with a realistic basis for pride by direct evidence that he can be successful in mastering academic skills. This recommendation rests upon the assumption that there is a cyclic relationship between high motivation and concrete evidence of success--as the child discovers that it is possible for him to learn, his natural motivation to learn will be enhanced and, conversely, if he experiences failure he will reduce his motivation for learning as a form of escape from a situation intolerable to his ego. It is of course assumed that some form of concrete evidence of educational success can be provided by concerned teachers to any normal child.

24. It is suggested further that competition be utilized as an effective stimulant to motivation. Not even the most severe critics or sentimental apologists for the educational status quo assert that minority group children, no matter how low their motivation for academic achievement, lack competitiveness. In fact, one could point to the success of many of these youngsters in athletic competition as evidence of an almost compensatory competitiveness among these individuals who

have been excluded from the usual channels of social, economic, and educational competition.

It is suggested, therefore, that the normal or compensatory competitiveness of these children be tapped as a source of motivation for high academic achievement. A system that would tie academic success to concrete rewards such as certificates, medals, plaques, and books should be developed, dramatically and attractively publicized, and instituted throughout the public schools as soon as possible. The project group examined models for raising the motivation of these children through reliance on money or tokens, as a form of money, as rewards (See Appendix, p.125), but this report rejects this form of motivation, probably more for moral and esthetic than for scientific or practical reasons.

25. It is further suggested that any system of concrete reward of outstanding individual achievement be planned and designed as an integral part of a system of group or class competition in order to guard against the reinforcement of ruthless, egocentric competitiveness as a part of the child's educational experience.

In the elementary and middle grades a well-planned system of collective competition, of competition for class prizes in

reading, spelling, and quality of class newspapers may well be a most important component for raising the quality of modern public school education. In such a program, the children will not only learn to read, do arithmetic and speak and write correctly, but will also learn that it is the responsibility of each individual to contribute to the success of the group--and it is the responsibility of the group to see that each individual within the group succeeds. The reinforcement of group success may be essential to the success of the individuals within the group and would be a positive use of peer group pressure toward, rather than away from, academic success among these children. Competition among schools to raise academic achievement could have the further effect of stimulating educational personnel to reinforcement of success through positive use of peer group pressure and support.

26. Given this individual-group competition emphasis, and the desire to build into the educational process for these children a sense of group loyalty and a sense of responsibility among more successful individuals to help others success --itself an important educational objective--it is necessary that all classes in the elementary and junior high schools of the Washington, D.C. public school system be organized in

terms of the reality of the variety of ability and differential talents among individual human beings, i.e., heterogeneous groupings. Studies indicate that in programs based on homogeneous groupings, children assigned to lower level classes are educationally damaged and personally rejected by such assignment--and, certainly, children who are assigned to superior classes are not benefitted to a degree sufficient to balance the humiliation inflicted upon the other students.

An individualized approach to the education of children can be more readily applied within a heterogeneous setting of varied achievement levels than within homegeneous grouping, which, by definition, attempts to separate individuals into generalized categories thereby obscuring and subjugating the individuality of each child. Further, homogeneous grouping reinforces low teacher expectations; depresses morale among those required to teach the so-called "dull" or "slow"; and, even more, lowers the self-image and motivation of those children officially stigmatized by such grouping. Varied abilities and talents among groups of children can be seen and used as educational assets by creative teachers.

Equally important is the fact that heterogeneous grouping of children in the public schools transforms each class into a replica of democratic reality; provides a just base for interclass academic competition, and provides an equal standard

by which the professional competence of teachers can be evaluated. Probably most important, heterogeneous grouping would make it possible to build into the educational process for these children the significant educational fact that children with superior academic, artistic or other talents are obligated to use these talents in the interests of others. Since every recommendation is capable of distortion or dilution, a warning is noted that heterogeneous grouping can be abused by separation of children into ranked groups within classes. Genuine heterogeneous grouping would make it possible for schools to operate in the service of a functional democracy by demonstrating that academic ability and social responsibility are interrelated.

27. While it is a basic premise of this report that if children are stimulated, accepted, and taught they will be motivated to learn and will, in fact, achieve at or above grade level, it must be recognized, as has been stated earlier, in any group of children there will be a few who need more care and services than the best education possible can provide.

    A comprehensive program to increase the academic achievement of all children must assist these few deviant children in functioning educationally to their own full capacity. It is, therefore, necessary that the Board of Education of Washington, D.C. develop an adequate program of professional diagnosis and treatment and periodic review so that children who are in need of specialized

care can receive specific therapy in terms of individual needs, and in very severe cases can be tutored with support from special agencies, private or voluntary. Standard practices of removing troublesome children from the classroom for special education are, however, to be rigorously examined; there is real question whether such segregated and separate education has therapeutic or educational value for any but the most severely psychotic or brain-injured child. Any therapeutic emphasis in or outside the classroom should be geared toward concrete education; that is, the development of academic skills, on the assumption that behavioral problems often respond to reinforcement of a sense of individual worth as reflected in evidence that children are able to achieve; the goal of all educational therapeutic work should be to keep children in the normal classroom situation; and if it is necessary to remove a severely disruptive child for specialized out of classroom help, he should be returned to the normal classroom learning situation as soon as possible.

As indicated earlier, many children who have been designated as "emotionally disturbed," as "disruptive," as "hyperactive," or "inattentive," and relegated to classes that are, in effect, dumping grounds, are actually normal children in need of human understanding and educational challenge. Great caution must be applied to ensure accurate professional diagnosis of individual problems as safeguards against such misidentification.

Any effective program of diagnosis, counselling, and support must also provide help not only for the child but for the classroom teacher as well, so that he may understand and respond with compassion and confidence to the variously expressed needs of each child. The best safeguard against disruptive classroom situations is concentrated attention of teacher and student to the educational process.

PARENTS

It has frequently been said by professional educators and concerned laymen that a critical factor responsible for the lower academic achievement of lower-status children and the higher achievement of children of middle-class parents is the direct involvement of middle-class parents in the eudcation of their children. It is claimed that middle-class parents take the initiative in seeing that their children achieve, that they help their children with their homework, and that they visit the schools frequently to confer with teachers and check on their childrens' performance. According to this point of view lower-status parents, on the other hand, are not as directly concerned with the academic performance of their children. It is believed that they visit the schools only when summoned and are generally apathetic, if not indifferent, to the academic success or failure of their children.

There is no systematic evidence to support these assumptions of basic class difference in parental attitudes toward education. Lower-status parents themselves, generally, have had less educational opportunity than middle-class parents, but they may well be as concerned as, or even more concerned than, other parents about the future of their children. In spite of infrequent attendance at PTA meetings, almost every working-class parent expresses a desire to see that his children have a better opportunity for education and success in life than he has had. Nonetheless, they often do seem unable to establish the kinds of relationships with school and educational officials which would facilitate the academic success of their children. (See Appendix pp. 136-155.)

Requisites:

28. It is, therefore, recommended that special and appropriate efforts be made to encourage direct involvement of lower-status parents in the activities of the schools attended by their children; to ensure that these schools are, and are perceived as, places where parents will be welcomed rather than as places to which they are summoned only to discuss problems.

    Specifically, efforts should be made as indicated earlier in the report, to involve as many lower-status mothers and fathers as possible in special roles of Educational Aides.

29. It is also suggested that programs of adult and parent education be developed and instituted within the schools, both during school hours, with parent and professional guidance, for those parents who could attend classes at that time, and after school hours for working parents. The involvement of parents in special programs during school hours would make it possible to meet the specific educational needs of the parents themselves and also relate these activities more directly to the program to raise academic achievement of their children.

    The most immediate purpose in the education of the parents would be to help the parents help their children. Specially designed materials should be prepared by a task force of parents and teachers for use in parent educational programs. For example, materials to aid parents in helping their children with assignments would obviously require a different approach from that employed in the materials used by the children themselves.

30. It is also suggested that special homework centers be developed within the school to be run by parents and Educational Aides and selected teachers during and after school hours. The activities of after-school homework sessions should be planned and controlled primarily by parents and Educational Aides, thereby approaching or paralleling the middle-class pattern of parental assistance with homework.

In order to increase the chances of a successful program for the involvement of parents in the activities of the public schools and to make effective the concerns of parents about the academic success of their children, the following conditions must prevail:

--Programs must be appropriate to the realistic needs, perspectives, and interests of parents for whom they are designed. Reliance on middle-class ways of expressing interest in the education of their children, such as attendance at PTA meetings, may not work for parents whose past experiences have led them to view schools, teachers, and educational officers as alien and rejecting.

--An atmosphere which reflects acceptance of the parents and which in conducive to mutual respect between parents and other educational personnel must be established and sustained by the educational officers responsible for the human and eeucational atmosphere of the school.

--Realistic involvement of lower-status parents in the educational activities of the school and the academic achievement of their children can probably be most successfully attained if the goal of academic achievement is clearly and specifically related to the parents' interests and motivations. For example, programs for parents, led by parents themselves in cooperation with educational personnel, should focus on the relationship between high academic achievement and social and economic mobility; and the relationship of mobility to general civil rights progress. These are sources for dynamic competition which, in fact, could parallel the status competition which seems to underlie so much of the educational drive of middle-class and upwardly mobile families. The schools, through realistic and effective programs, can develop in these parents a sense of personal confidence and help them develop a respect for rational and disciplined approaches in seeking and obtaining desired social change.

--The schools, as community centers, open in evening and weekend hours and in the summer, with professional and community staff, could be available for assistance and education in various day-to-day problems such as welfare procedures, employment, housing and sanitation, health care and nutrition,

consumer and police protection. These can be seen, with education, as interrelated parts of the rational processes of democracy.

--It would be absoluately important that the schools, in involving parents in a specific educational process for themselves and for their children, be perceived by parents as allies rather than as adversaries in the struggle for equality and justice.

EVALUATION OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

It is absolutely essential that the mechanisms, appropriate instruments, and the related personnel for ongoing evaluation be developed and used in order to obtain objective indications of the progress of each student, to correct weaknesses, to set standards, and to communicate progress to students, teachers, and parents.

Requisites:

31. Specifically, evaluation must be a multi-level process, that is, that it occur at all stages of the educational process. The teachers should continuously evaluate the progress of each child. Principals should continuously evaluate the rate of improvement in academic effectiveness of the children and the teachers. Executives in the district and in the total system should evaluate the effectiveness of teachers and principals. The superintendent of schools and the Board of Education should objectively evaluate the effectiveness of the system as a whole as indicated by the academic achievement of the children in that system.

32. The total evaluative procedure must be developed and operate in ways conducive to determining the strengths and designating the weaknesses in order to correct the weaknesses and reinforce the strengths at each level of the educational process. Such procedures must be supportive and not punitive.

33. Standardized tests and other evaluative methods in reading and in mathematics should be administered at least three times a year and provision made for prompt scoring and analysis so that programs for reinforcement of strengths and correction of weaknesses can be immediately implemented and reevaluated within the same school year.

34. In spite of all of the controversies centering around the use of standardized tests seeking to measure academic achievement among lower-status children, these tests should be used as an instrument of evaluation since they provide a single standard of achievement related to general academic competitiveness. The chief, and justifiable, objections to these tests are that they have been traditionally used as snob appeals and as instruments of exclusion to reject lower-status children; they have been used to facilitate tracking and to isolate lower-status children from the main educational process. However, these same instruments can be used to facilitate and mobilize programs directed toward improving academic achievement. Such tests can be used diagnostically, that is to determine

what the school's teachers must do to help the children increase their own competence. They make it possible to chart rates of progress and to help the child be effective in a competitive society. The middle-class child has been schooled to strive competitively for academic success. He does not receive automatic promotion without demonstrating achievement. Competition is, therefore, an inescapable ingredient of effective education for the lower-stass child. Promotion must be evidence of at least a minimum level of performance expected and required and achievable at a given grade.

The issue is not competition versus no competition since it would be unjust and condescending to teach privileged children to compete while, under the guise of preventing frustration, to discourage competition among lower-status children. The issue rather is for competition to serve a facilitating role rather than an inhibiting role in academic achievement. Therefore, it is a requisite that standardized achievement tests be used, at grades 1 through 9, and that the tests now in use be continued for at least the next three years to serve as a basis for measuring the effectiveness of this design in attaining high academic achievement in the city.

35. The results in the periodic evaluation of academic achievement of children must be clearly explained and communicated in parents' meetings and by letter to parents in understandable

terms related specifically to grade level achievement of each individual child in relation to national norms. Teachers' charts in each classroom will help the child follow his own rate of growth. Charts for each class should be posted in the principal's office so principals and other supervisors may follow the rate of growth of the children for whom they are responsible.

Such techniques of explanation and communication would provide additional motivation value for personnel within the schools, for parents, and for children.

OVERALL ORGANIZATION--GOVERNANCE AND ADMINISTRATION OF PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEMS

A most important factor responsible for effective educational programs leading to high quality of education and academic achievement of children in public schools, as ascertained by study and analysis for this report, is the important role of educational leadership. Effective programs have at their core leadership which provides the commitment, the momentum, and cohesive force for stating high educational goals and insisting upon positive programs relating to curriculum, teacher effectiveness, parental involvement, and all

school boards are the ultimate responsible agents for the quality of education provided for the children in the public schools of their city.

This inescapable total responsibility is based upon the fact that it is the school board which is responsible for setting the standards for the selection of the top educational professional--the superintendent of schools. In fulfilling this responsibility, it is obvious that a school board selects a superintendent whose general philosophy, manner, style, and educational leadership is compatible with its own desires. The quality of its selection determines the effectiveness of any design for attainment of high academic achievement. Certainly no school board would select as its chief executive officer responsible for implementing its design for educational excellence an individual who was incapable of implementing its design or who had serious reservations about it; and no self-respecting superintendent of the requisite professional competence would accept a position to implement an educational design which he believes to be superficial or impossible to implement.

It is the school board which must continuously evaluate the effectiveness of the superintendent, holding him accountable for the efficiency of the entire system as this is measured by the level of academic achievement of the students in the schools in that system.

It is the school board which is held accountable by parents, by taxpayers, and the general public to ensure that all policies and procedures related to curriculum, educational materials, adequacy of facilities, certification and performance of teachers and other educational personnel are, in fact, conducive to the highest quality of education and achievement of students.

Passive school boards, school boards that abrogate the awesome responsibility of holding professionals accountable for educational efficiency cannot contribute to the attainment of educational excellence. School boards which attempt, on the other hand, to interfere with educational and administrative operations which are the legitimate responsibility of competent professionals, also do not contribute to the attainment of educational effectiveness in a public school system. In this regard, this design opposes performance contracting to outside groups as an abdication of responsibility for educational leadership. The educational system, whose personnel are entrusted with that responsibility, should make andfulfill its own contract to the children whom it serves. If an outside group can raise the academic achievement of the children, there is no reason why the professional personnel of the public school system itself cannot do the same.

Requisites:

36. It is, therefore, recommended that the Board of Education of

Washington, D.C., as a first order of business, develop a two-pronged strategy to determine and to ensure that the Board serve as a most positive agent in planning and attaining educational excellence in the schools of the District:

--That the Board select its superintendent in terms of standards and criteria and characteristics of commitment, strength, courage, and integrity consistent with its overall design for the attainment of educational excellence. A large urban school system can function effectively only with a superintendent of highest quality. Such a superintendent must set objectives and provide a complex system of interrelated supports designed to obtain and sustain academic achievement among all the children in the public schools of the city.

--That the Board avail itself of independent consultants to advise on the specific ingredients of a positive role for the Board in relationship to its professional employees, in fulfillment of its overall responsibility to the public, and in sustaining a level of educational efficiency in the operation of the public schools consistent with educational excellence.

These interrelated objectives, taken together, would seem to be the priority, the first necessary condition for establishing the climate of commitment throughout the public school system which the design of this report demands as its foundation. The lines of authority, responsibility, and accountability must be clear, and must be enforced with due regard to professional integrity, the public welfare, and the effectiveness and dignity of all of the human beings involved in the total educational enterprise.

V. THE CHALLENGE

Washington, D.C., the nation's capital, is a city which has permitted its public schools to become predominantly black. In this regard, and in many other ways, Washington, D.C. is the symbol of the fact that America has not yet found the remedy for its chronic form of racism. Whites have fled to the surrounding suburbs, and return to the city only to exercise their rights and prerogatives as controllers of the instruments of government, otherwies abandoning the city to its black minorities. The fact of racial segregation as the American way of life is reinforced by the systematic exclusion of blacks from the predominantly white surrounding suburbs. This pattern of institutionalized residential segregation which permits cities to become essentially black compounds, and suburbs to become essentially protected preserves, is not peculiar to Washington; rather, it is characteristic of large metropolitan areas throughout the natio

Given the fact that public schools, so far, reflect the racial populations of cities, the goal of attaining high quality education through the democratic process of realistic and administratively feasible forms of desegregation appears to be, at least temporarily, abandoned and is being replaced by the need to concentrate on raising the quality of education without regard to the present racial composition of a city's public schools. This

educational imperative must be met, for the present generation of students in the public schools of our cities is not expendable. If we continue to frustrate these students educationally, they will be, in fact, the ingredients of the "social Dynamite" which threatens the stability of our cities, our economy, and the democratic form of government. It is conceivable, also, that a present emphasis on raising the quality of education for these children will eventually facilitate rather than block the continued struggle for a non-racial organization fo the public schools in the United States.

The realities of Washington, D.C., the fact that more than 90% of the children in the public schools are black, provide this city with a unique opportunity to demonstrate that it is possible to provide for the children now attending its public schools an education of excellence within the limitations which the anachronism of racial segregation imposes upon the deeper education of all American children--white and black. The Board of Education of Washington, D.C. has this awesome challenge--it has the capacity to provide an education of such unqualified excellence that these children, the majority of whom have inherited a history of rejection, stigma, and racial humiliation, will be able to compete effectively with more privileged and sheltered children. They will be able to compete without resort to special "compensatory programs," without resort to the racial condescension of the double or triple standards of college "open admissions" programs, which, at best, can only be

effective for a token number as long as the basic problem of inadequate elementary and secondary education remains unsolved. It will be possible to provide a program of educational excellence for these children in the public schools only if there is a genuine belief that this is possible and only if there is the commitment, the drive, and the insistence that this be done; and only, of course, if there is the courage to make the procedural and total organizational changes which must be made if this goal is to be accomplished.

The challenge proposed in this design for educational excellence in the Washington, D.C. public schools will not be easy to accept and overcome. There are formidable barriers--flagrant and insidious--in the way of providing rejected children and groups with the educational tools essential to become competitive contributors to and constructive participants in our society. The determinants of past discrimination, inequities, and cruelties are still operative; their consequences and residues still profoundly affect the nature, structure, assumptions, operation and products of the educational process. Given the absence of evidence, it can only be hoped that it is possible to outflank or overcome the inherent cruelties and intended inferiority of racially segregated schools and to displace them with a system of educational excellence isolated from the continued racism of the larger society.

White and black racists may insist upon shackling our public schools with the characteristics of inferiority to sustain their vested interests

in continued educational chaos, and racial polarization. Practical men may continue to exercise their power in order to block appropriations necessary for efficient public education. Sentimentalists might assert with compassionate persuasiveness that deprived children will be harmed if they are required to meet standards of educational excellence. Educational bureaucrats will persist in their assertion that deprived children cannot be more effectively educated in our public schools and that it would be unrealistic to attempt the type of organizational and procedural changes essential to attain this objective. And, of course, quite reasonable men and women might decide that the resources of courage, commitment, energy, and funds necessary to attain this goal are just too great--and that the anticipated returns would not be worth it.

If any one or a combination of these barriers prevail, it is obvious that the Board of Education of Washington, D.C., in spite of its best intentions, will not be able to meet the challenge of taking the first steps toward providing the goal of educational excellence for the children of its public schools.

But if these barriers can be overcome and if this seemingly "impossible dream," which is, in fact, a quite possible reality, were to be attained in the public schools of Washington, D.C. it would be a model for the controllers of public school systems in every large city throughout the country. If this were done in Washington, D.C., it

would be in many ways an outstanding example of a paradoxically American form of poetic justice. It would be a major contribution to the strengthening of democracy and would therefore provide a solid base for pride and integrity for all Americans.